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Advancement of women

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission

Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Security Council
Seventieth year

Peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2012/29), in which the Council requested me to report, no later than December 2014, on further progress in United Nations peacebuilding efforts in the aftermath of conflict, including the issue of women's participation in peacebuilding, with particular emphasis on the impact on the ground, including lessons learned from United Nations peacebuilding activities in country-specific contexts. The report builds on my earlier reports on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict (A/63/881-S/2009/304, A/64/866-S/2010/386 and A/67/499-S/2012/746) as well as on women's participation in peacebuilding (A/65/354-S/2010/466) and reflects on the elements contained in the aforementioned statement of the President.

2. The Security Council and the General Assembly have long recognized the centrality of peacebuilding to United Nations political, security and developmental efforts in countries emerging from conflict, as well as the complexity of peacebuilding challenges. Our understanding of peacebuilding has come a long way since the creation of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in 2005. We have become increasingly cognizant that peacebuilding is inherently a political exercise that depends on political leadership and demands sustained international political accompaniment, as well as a favourable regional environment.

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3. Peacebuilding represents the sum of our efforts to create the foundations for sustained peace after conflict. It is carried out by peacekeeping operations, special political missions and United Nations country teams, consisting of agencies, funds and programmes. It requires firm and continued support from Member States, and lies at the very heart of our ambitions in countries emerging from conflict. Avoiding the relapse into war was the primary motivation for the creation of the peacebuilding architecture. As mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council, Member States will review the peacebuilding architecture in 2015. I hope that this review will shed light on how we, collectively, can better assist States and societies to recover from conflict and avoid the calamitous return to violence.

4. In my last report (A/67/499-S/2012/746), I identified three key priority directions for the engagement of the United Nations system in peacebuilding, namely inclusivity, institution-building and sustained international support and mutual accountability. These priority areas are intimately linked and form the core of our efforts to promote long-term peace and stability and avoid the recurrence of violent conflicts. Post-conflict institutions need to be rooted in inclusive political agreements and systems that make possible meaningful participation by wide-ranging social groups. Political processes and institution-building require sustained and long-term international political, financial and technical support.

5. Building political consensus and social cohesion requires steady investment, as well as flexible and agile responses to immediate needs. Peace agreements present a critical opportunity for achieving consensus about the key principles on which institution-building should rest. The political agreements that underlie transition processes often require strong international support and a favourable regional environment. The Peacebuilding Commission, which is mandated to promote the coherence of international efforts in support of post-conflict countries, continues to play a vital role in facilitating the constructive engagement of international and regional stakeholders.

6. Advancing the extension of State authority and rebuilding State institutions in the aftermath of conflict is crucial to the sustainability of peace. The Security Council has recognized the centrality of these issues, including them as priority tasks in the mandates of numerous peacekeeping and special political missions. The development of legitimate, accountable and effective institutions that deliver services equitably is essential for countries to respond to the needs of the population and create non-violent channels to manage conflicts. Security sector and rule of law institutions deserve particular attention as the organs responsible for the protection of the population and the legitimate defence of State institutions.

7. Implementing these priorities remains an ongoing challenge. Peacekeeping and special political missions and the different agencies, funds and programmes that support the development of critical post-conflict institutions still face difficulties finding the necessary resources. While much of the capacity for security interventions and political facilitation is provided as part of Security Council mandates, the capabilities and resources required for institution-building are often absent or slow to arrive, leaving political transitions frail and unsupported. Women's participation in peacebuilding is often underfunded, undermining their contribution to stability and recovery. The Peacebuilding Fund partly addresses this gap in the short term by providing quick funding for critical institution-building, political dialogue and rule of law initiatives. Ensuring the necessary longer-term and larger-scale support, however, remains challenging.

II. Progress update

8. In the two years since my last report, the United Nations has made significant gains in assisting countries to consolidate peace after conflict despite far-reaching challenges. A number of countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Tunisia, which are recovering from recent periods of violent conflict or political crisis, are now developing more stable institutions and more inclusive political systems. The closure of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the Organization's transition to a country team-only presence at the end of March 2014 underscores the progress achieved. The eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, among others, are starting to emerge from decades of violence and instability. Yet, they face immense challenges developing institutions and achieving social cohesion. At the same time, the international community continues to grapple with relapses into violent conflict in the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

9. Sierra Leone's steady progress in consolidating peace since its civil war ended in 2002 has enabled the country to focus on sustainable development, thereby solidifying more than a decade of increasing stability. During this period, successive United Nations missions and the country team adopted an integrated approach around a joint strategy in support of national efforts. This was bolstered by collective Member State support and improved relations with neighbouring countries. The Organization's strong partnership with successive Governments and the people of Sierra Leone made possible the withdrawal of UNIPSIL and the assumption of greater responsibility by the Government.

10. The United Nations contributed broad and multifaceted support to Sierra Leone's transition. The inter-party dialogue organized by UNIPSIL, with strong backing from the Peacebuilding Commission, reinforced confidence in the country's political system by helping to maintain a level playing field and secure the participation of all political parties in the 2012 elections. Likewise, the United Nations also supported institutions, such as the All Political Parties Women's Association, whose involvement boosted women's participation and increased popular trust in the process. Sierra Leone has successfully conducted three peaceful and credible elections since emerging from war, anchoring democratic institutions and inclusive politics.

11. Various United Nations entities also assisted with the creation of key Sierra Leonean institutions, including the National Human Rights Commission, the National Electoral Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the ombudsman's office. These institutions have contributed to the legitimacy of the State and its public accountability. The National Human Rights Commission, for instance, investigates complaints and initiates inquiries, such as its notable probe into alleged gross violations of human rights in Bumbuna, Tonkolili district, in 2012. The United Nations also assisted the Government and national institutions in tackling longer-term challenges, including management of natural resources, youth unemployment, security sector reform and conventional weapons and ammunition management.

12. Significant challenges lie ahead for Sierra Leone, illustrating the need for sustained support, including from the Peacebuilding Commission. The United Nations, with financial backing from the Peacebuilding Fund, will continue to

collaborate with the Government of Sierra Leone on its constitutional review, security sector reform and the strengthening of human rights institutions, among other issues. In addition, Sierra Leone's mutual accountability framework, created in accordance with the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, provides a mechanism for aligning donors in support of government priorities, strengthening national ownership and the coherence of international support.

13. Sierra Leone's progress stands in stark contrast to the tragic relapses into violence that we have witnessed in several countries, despite the presence of United Nations peace operations and extensive international efforts. Lessons must be learned from the experience in South Sudan, where the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was mandated to consolidate peace and security in the newly independent country. In establishing the new Mission, the Security Council, in its resolutions 1996 (2011) and 2057 (2012), stressed the importance of supporting national peacebuilding priorities and requested UNMISS to provide a plan for United Nations-system support to specific peacebuilding tasks. A United Nations peacebuilding support plan was aligned to the South Sudan Development Plan, using the New Deal Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals as a framework. There were visible gains in creating and strengthening public institutions and processes in the first year and a half following South Sudan's independence. Progress was also achieved towards transforming its national police into a more professional force. The Mission used its good offices to significant effect to help the Government address emerging threats, including from inter-communal violence and conflicts along the country's borders, as well as from landmines and explosive remnants of war.

14. Despite these advances, significant gaps in the development of political and security institutions remained. Major outbreaks of violence and the abrupt contraction of State revenues in 2012, following the dispute with the Sudan over oil exports, slowed progress and impeded the efforts of the United Nations and the broader international community to support the extension of State authority and the expansion of service delivery. Infighting among the political elite, allegations of large-scale corruption and incidents of violent abuse by undisciplined elements of the national security forces undermined trust in the political leadership. The severe shortfall in State resources and continued tension with the Sudan undermined plans to demobilize and reintegrate former fighters, while national security forces expanded as regional rebellions were resolved by integrating armed groups into the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Notwithstanding international efforts, the country's leaders failed to broaden the political space and dialogue, conduct wide consultation on a national constitution, or ensure a separation of the army from the ruling political party.

15. Political competition, which involved historical disputes and struggles for control of State resources, led to a split within the military and police forces and culminated in the resumption of violent conflict late in 2013. This conflict escalated with a speed, scope and scale that the United Nations and others did not anticipate. The intensification of violence, particularly targeted killings, further created deep ethnic and regional cleavages, which have complicated the search for a settlement. Gains in institutions development were largely lost when the power struggle spiralled out of control and led the country back into a devastating conflict.

16. Although recent developments in South Sudan call for deeper, long-term reflection by the international community, a few preliminary conclusions can be drawn. First, there was a need for greater political encouragement, incentives and pressure to promote advances in the critical areas that could ensure the non-violent management of political tensions. Secondly, South Sudan illustrates the challenges that nationally led peacebuilding strategies and priorities face in countries where deep political divisions persist and control of the State is contested. In such cases, support for nationally led initiatives can limit the impact and range of approaches and strategies. Thirdly, United Nations missions and country teams must adapt their peacebuilding approaches and strategies more flexibly in response to changes in the political environment. Lastly, technical and programmatic support for institution-building needs to be grounded in strong and effective political agreements as well as measures to build social cohesion and ensure the non-violent management of political tensions. Political settlements also need sustained international accompaniment to reinforce adherence.

17. The relapse into violent conflict in the Central African Republic highlights similar issues and underscores the importance of the three priority areas outlined in my last report, although unlike the state of affairs in South Sudan, sustained international support was lacking. Despite several national dialogues and extensive external political facilitation, the State's political institutions remained fragile and lacked inclusivity. The north-east of the country was chronically excluded from political participation. At many levels, the State remained characterized by corrupt and predatory behaviour. Government institutions, particularly outside the capital, have been either non-existent or extremely weak, making violent attempts to gain access to government resources and State power feasible.

18. Successive United Nations missions and the country team received limited support for efforts to support the development of the State's institutional capacity and improve mechanisms of governance. The limited support was compounded by fragmented interventions and the absence of a strong and coherent political framework for their implementation. The initiatives aimed at security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration from 2010 to 2012 were not accompanied by sustained commitment from different armed groups and successive national Governments. The lack of sustained commitment was compounded by fragmented security sector interventions from international, regional and subregional actors, which were inadequately grounded in a national vision for State reform. Successive attempts at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration lacked sufficient funding and political support as well as approaches better suited to the political context.

19. New opportunities have been created with the appointment of transitional authorities and the engagement of regional actors. In order to avoid replicating the shortfalls of past attempts to promote long-term solutions, cohesion among international and subregional interventions will remain particularly important. In parts of the country, the deployment of peacekeepers has provided a measure of security. This window of opportunity needs to be seized upon to build a more viable political consensus and more effective and accountable State, security and public institutions, which are essential to protect the rights of citizens, perform basic State functions and defend the State against violent challenges.

20. My Rights Up Front initiative to prevent and end serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law has guided the United Nations responses in the Central African Republic and South Sudan following the emergence or relapse of violent conflict. The initiative aims to prevent serious violations, but where it is too late to do so, it focuses on the protection of civilians. Human rights violations are good indicators of worse things to come. When mass atrocities are allowed to occur, they can create cycles of violence and long-term animosities, presenting serious obstacles to the social cohesion needed to restore peace and security. The prevention of serious human rights violations is fundamental to the environment in which peace and development can flourish.

21. Sierra Leone highlights the potential for the strategic integration of United Nations efforts to consolidate peace. However, continued improvements are required to better align conflict analysis, political leadership and programmatic support in the field and in mission planning. The 2013 United Nations policy on integrated assessment and planning provides for joint analysis and a common United Nations vision of priorities for peace consolidation in each situation. Its implementation should help to ensure that mission planning is faster and more strategically focused. The early stages of mission planning and start-up are often arduous and lack strategic clarity, as experienced in the Central African Republic and Mali. As noted in my report on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict (A/68/696-S/2014/5), aligning mission and country team resources and capacity with a strategy for early institution-building continues to be a significant challenge.

22. Such alignment has progressed in the critical area of rule of law. The joint global focal point for the police, justice and corrections areas in the rule of law in post-conflict and other crisis situations is helping to link the expertise of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations entities in order to develop and implement common strategies and programmes. Established in 2012, the global focal point has already led to increased inter-agency collaboration in Guinea, Libya, Mali and Somalia. An independent review of its first year of operation noted that the focal point holds further promise for the delivery of assistance to the field. Its next steps include an augmented role in the strategic direction of United Nations rule of law assistance, including support to mission transition planning and technical assistance on programme design and implementation.

23. Integration has often been complicated by high transaction costs and different mandates among various United Nations entities. It has been shown to be effective when operations are guided by a clear vision, with one set of objectives, together with a strategy for consolidating peace. We have seen in many cases that the facilitation and good offices initiatives of my Special Representatives, Special Envoys and Special Advisers are most effective when complemented by activities of country teams in the areas of institutional strengthening, dialogue and inclusive economic development. The Peacebuilding Fund has often been instrumental in advancing such an integrated approach.

24. During the period under review, the United Nations provided electoral assistance in a number of post-conflict contexts, including in Guinea and Madagascar, often combining technical assistance with good offices and diplomatic support to help ensure that elections contributed to peace consolidation rather than igniting tensions. One important institutional innovation to improve delivery of

electoral assistance is the establishment of the first, single, system-wide electoral roster designed to ensure the rapid deployment of electoral experts by all relevant parts of the United Nations system.

25. Positioning technical and programmatic support to contribute to larger political and strategic peacebuilding goals in non-mission settings is also key. The Joint (UNDP-Department of Political Affairs) Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention seeks to increase the Organization's capacity to support national partners in their efforts to attain peaceful and sustainable development, including through the deployment of peace and development advisers. For example, peace and development advisers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, building on the efforts made by my regional Special Representative, have supported cross-border community-level dialogues to address tensions related to the use of water resources. In Kyrgyzstan, the adviser has supported government efforts to create local conflict-prevention mechanisms and worked closely with various government institutions to review proposed legislation for conflict sensitivity. The Peacebuilding Fund has, in recent years, increasingly supported this programme in order to ensure integrated and conflict-sensitive planning and programming.

26. Developing lessons on peacebuilding good practices requires more comprehensive information on the impact of diverse approaches and programmes. Experience has shown that quantifiable evidence of peacebuilding impact can appear elusive. Indeed, what is most important in some contexts, such as rebuilding societal trust and institutional legitimacy, may be the most difficult to assess. Too often activities focus on "hardware", such as equipment and buildings, which are easy to measure, rather than the more intangible outcomes that target the drivers of conflict. This has, for example, been the case in security sector reform, where there is a need to go beyond training and equipping, to investments in improved governance and oversight of security forces. The main threats to peace and stability should drive the design of peacebuilding activities as well as the development of corresponding benchmarks. The United Nations will need to expand and improve its mechanisms, including the use of surveys, for evaluating and monitoring progress in these areas.

III. Inclusivity

27. In my last report, I stressed the importance of mechanisms for inclusive politics in post-conflict transitions. I cannot overstate their importance today. Promoting inclusivity can involve difficult choices and trade-offs regarding urgency, representativeness, effectiveness and legitimacy. There are times, for example, when a peacemaking approach must be limited to the actual belligerents and political elites. Yet, in order to sustain peace and uphold basic rights of political participation, subsequent mechanisms for broad participation need to be embraced, with the goal of increasing inclusivity over time.

28. The promotion of inclusive politics is also integral to genuine national ownership of peacebuilding efforts and strategies. Where peacebuilding efforts are rooted in inclusive societal consultation and efforts to minimize exclusionary practices, they generate trust and legitimacy in the State and its institutions. By contrast, the absence of inclusive politics in the wake of conflict all too often contributes to violent contestation for control of the State. In such environments, the

timing and conduct of elections has to be approached with caution, as contested electoral processes and outcomes can be destabilizing. Any effort to build sustainable peace must manage political competition through institutions governed by law, rather than on the battlefield. At the same time, the development of mechanisms for inclusive politics and broad participation must take into account the divisions, fears and perceptions inherent in post-conflict communities.

29. Mechanisms for effective public participation are critical in the reform of core State institutions. In this regard, Tunisia provides an inspiring example. With broad participation from political parties and civil society, its political process culminated in the adoption of a new Constitution. The provision of technical expertise by the United Nations to all political parties in the Constituent Assembly, as well as the facilitation of inputs from Tunisian professional and civil society groups, were key to the credibility and success of the process.

30. In recent years the United Nations has used its good offices to advance inclusive political systems as part of strategies to promote peace consolidation. In Guinea, for example, my Special Representative for West Africa was instrumental in facilitating an inter-party agreement for the conduct of parliamentary elections in 2013. The country team developed innovative mechanisms to complement these negotiations and broaden participation by other key stakeholders, including women. To buttress the agreement, the United Nations conducted a series of public forums with local political leaders, which built awareness and trust in the electoral process. Moreover, the country team collaborated with the main political parties to train electoral monitors and build electoral management capacity within each party alliance.

31. These efforts were further supplemented by an initiative — the Women's Situation Room — that provided support to a network of local women's organizations, enabling women to play a crucial role as electoral monitors with a rapid response capacity. South-South cooperation between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Guinea, Mali and Senegal for technical support and training provided to the women's electoral monitors was a key aspect of the initiative, which was replicated in the elections in Guinea-Bissau in April 2014. The initiative encouraged confidence in the electoral process while at the same time strengthening women's political participation. These collaborative interventions helped to ensure that the 2013 election took place without the inter-communal violence that marred Guinea's first post-crisis elections in 2010.

32. In Burundi the Peacebuilding Commission, together with the country team, supported the efforts of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) to foster a more inclusive political environment in the context of increased political tensions and human rights violations. My Special Representative worked closely with the Government, opposition parties and civil society organizations to strengthen political dialogue, including through the organization of a series of workshops, which spurred the consensual adoption of an electoral road map and a code of conduct for the elections in 2015. BNUB also supported national stakeholders in developing a new electoral code, which was adopted by the National Assembly in April 2014. The emphasis on broad public engagement was intended to safeguard against electoral violence or contested electoral outcomes. As ongoing violence related to the youth wings of political parties is of particular concern, my Special Representative also promoted non-violent engagement of youth in politics,

including through programmes funded by the Peacebuilding Fund and implemented by the country team. These efforts were conducted in advance of the withdrawal of BNUB at the end of 2014 and the deployment of a United Nations electoral observer mission requested by the Government.

33. The Government of Kyrgyzstan established an agency in 2013 to lead the implementation of a new government policy, developed with United Nations and Peacebuilding Fund support, on national unity and inter-ethnic relations. The United Nations also provided technical assistance for a broad dialogue concerning multilingual education, minority representation in politics and more inclusive local self-government. Moreover, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and UNDP provided legal training and logistical support to the Women's Peace Committees, which made possible the monitoring of community-level tensions and improved government response, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees supported durable solutions for displaced persons. These activities contributed to a deeper sense of social cohesion and boosted trust between the population and local authorities throughout the southern districts of the country affected by the conflict. Despite areas of ongoing fragility, evaluations have shown that these programmes also nurtured a heightened sense of security and safety in some areas affected by the unrest in 2010.

34. UN-Women, with financial assistance from the Peacebuilding Fund, supported women-run conflict-resolution mechanisms, known as "peace huts" in Liberia. These mechanisms provided safe communal spaces for women to promote community dialogue and mediation efforts and are credited with having improved local security. In some areas, "peace huts" have also become a platform to protest the illegal exploitation of Liberia's natural resources.

35. Giving voice to women's concerns in all stages of peacemaking and peacebuilding is essential to the development of inclusive politics. Further advancing women's participation in post-conflict political and development processes, as set forth in my Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding, remains a top priority. Since my report on women's participation in peacebuilding (A/65/354-S/2010/466), a growing number of women have been appointed to senior positions as mediators, envoys and members of negotiation teams. The United Nations has also increased its support to women's civil society organizations in accessing peace processes and advancing post-conflict political participation.

36. Progress is being made in the allocation of funding to support gender-responsive peacebuilding programming, although tracking progress remains difficult owing to the lack of good data. The Peacebuilding Fund uses a gender marker to track funding allocations to women's empowerment and gender equality. The steady increase in projects funded from the Peacebuilding Fund in which gender is fully integrated — from 10 per cent in 2008 to 70 per cent in 2013 — reflects a growing recognition of the relevance of gender issues to all peacebuilding interventions. Nevertheless, funding allocations for projects whose main objective is to promote women's empowerment and gender equality are falling short of the 15 per cent target. Such allocations amounted to 7.4 per cent in 2013, down from 10.3 per cent in 2012 when the Fund's allocation was boosted because of the gender promotion initiative. A review of over 300 UNDP projects in six post-conflict contexts revealed

that 14 per cent of funding had been allocated to activities that would make a significant impact on gender equality, while 6 per cent of funding was allocated exclusively to women's empowerment and gender equality. This finding highlights the continuing need for proactive approaches, such as the second gender promotion initiative that the Fund launched in 2014.

37. Despite some promising developments, gaps remain between the ambitions expressed in the Seven-Point Action Plan and the Organization's concrete activities in this area. In particular, there has been a continued lack of investment in activities supporting women's economic empowerment, including in addressing issues of access, use and control of natural resources. I also encourage United Nations entities to prioritize women's access to justice in rule of law programming in post-conflict environments.

38. The United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal stands out for its multifaceted efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into its management and programming. Thirty per cent of monies earmarked for projects during the funding round in 2012 were allocated to addressing the needs of women and girls and/or gender equality. Projects supporting land reform, conflict prevention, the rule of law and the reintegration of child soldiers all included specific provisions to address the needs of women and girls. Such measures contributed to the implementation of the Government's national action plan on Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). One of these projects undertook women's safety audits to determine the location of police station deployments in order to improve the security of women and girls. A project on land issues ensured extensive women's participation in consultations on land-use planning, which has traditionally been a male domain. Developments in Nepal demonstrate that appreciable progress can be made with targeted funding, leadership and capacities for gender-responsive programming.

39. As I pointed out in my last report, youth should also be part of inclusive peacebuilding processes to bolster the likelihood of sustained peace. In the ensuing years the Peacebuilding Support Office, together with other United Nations entities, NGOs and youth organizations, developed guiding principles on the participation of young people in peacebuilding. The principles build upon experiences from UNDP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which have adolescent and youth-specific interventions in many conflict-affected countries.

IV. Institution-building

40. Building strong and effective institutions remains a core element of post-conflict peace consolidation and a critical task for the United Nations system. Effective, legitimate and accountable State institutions that deliver public services reduce incentives for violent conflict and strengthen the State's resilience in the face of possible renewed violence. The capacity of such institutions to respond to popular expectations is one of the key conditions for sustainable peace. Experience shows, however, that this goal is neither quick nor easy to achieve and that efforts to build post-conflict institutions must be conceived of as a long-term undertaking even under the best of circumstances. In my last progress report on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict (A/68/696-S/2014/5), I emphasized the role of

institution-building at both the political and technical levels, and underlined the need for a more systematic and coherent response by the United Nations that is strongly connected to national priorities.

41. Investments in institution-building in the aftermath of conflict must be planned with close attention to the prevailing political situation. Unresolved tensions and political competition, as well as popular mistrust in Government, limit the feasibility of rapid wholesale reforms of public administration in the aftermath of conflict. Such is the conclusion of a recent United Nations review, which recommended rapid support to restoring basic functionality and service delivery using existing institutions and systems. The review also emphasized the need to provide greater support to local governments, which play a critical role in providing social services and rebuilding the trust in and legitimacy of the Government.

42. We have seen a number of positive examples in recent years that the United Nations can build on going forward to support institution-building in post-conflict situations. For example, the UNDP-supported Regional Initiative for Capacity Enhancement of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, funded by Norway, helped to address the inability of South Sudan to deliver core public services from 2010 onwards. By embedding civil service mentors from neighbouring States in various ministries, the project provided rapid, tailored and cost-effective civil service capacity development. Some embedded mentors have continued to work despite renewed conflict. Notwithstanding the violence that erupted in December 2013, the programme can serve as a model in other post-conflict settings.

43. The United Nations invested heavily in the revitalization of State institutions and the improvement of access to justice in the regions of Côte d'Ivoire most affected by the post-electoral violence in 2011, working with the Government to redeploy State representatives and refurbish State infrastructure. As the right to Ivorian citizenship was highly contested during the conflict, initiatives were launched to simplify birth registration and the issuance of identity papers, which contributed to better access to services and higher electoral participation, as well as strengthened social cohesion. Community-led, early childhood development centres, supported through UNICEF, further helped to build social cohesion by bringing together women from divergent backgrounds around the common goal of children's well-being. With United Nations support, new systems of community-oriented policing and oversight were also introduced as a means of repairing public trust and confidence in the police and gendarmerie. These steps, and other measures, have expedited the return of refugees and displaced persons, as well as the resolution of a number of local, land-related disputes.

44. Reform of rule of law institutions, including improvements in oversight, accountability and administration, is often a key priority for post-conflict countries. In Burundi support to the National Independent Human Rights Commission has been central to the United Nations strategy to enhance the country's capacity to monitor and report on human rights violations. The Commission, which carries out human rights investigations, has worked to improve the impartiality and performance of the security forces and to enhance overall respect for human rights in Burundi. In Liberia the United Nations supported the establishment of the first of three justice and security hubs, in Gbarnga, with additional hubs under development in Zwedru and Harper. The hubs, which receive extensive funding from the

Peacebuilding Fund, are a key component of the Government's strategy for extending justice and security services beyond the capital. The results of a user satisfaction survey conducted in 2013 indicated higher levels of appreciation for security services in counties covered by the Gbarnga hub and credited it with reduced levels of violence. Yet, challenges remain, including the generation of sustainable domestic funding for the hubs and the slow deployment of necessary staff and services.

45. As in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, expanding the presence of the State into areas previously controlled by armed groups remains critical to stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Building upon new opportunities created by the surrender of the March 23 Movement (M23), the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations entities and other partners work within the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy to support the State's ability to re-establish its presence and functions. The initiative bridges the Mission's protection and stabilization efforts, providing logistical and technical support for the deployment of public administration, police and the judiciary. Within this framework, UNDP and MONUSCO have supported mobile courts and the deployment of a special police unit for the protection of women and children, which led to the referral of more than 1,000 cases of sexual violence to the judicial system in 2013 and the first half of 2014. Such efforts are combined with the promotion of dialogue with local communities to ensure greater acceptance and greater public accountability of the new institutions and the peaceful resolution of disputes. Progress in many parts of the east could be further enhanced by addressing implementation delays, funding shortfalls and a lack of government employees in areas where the Government has regained control. The time lapse between military control and the extension of State authority can undermine the State's ability to create a stabilizing presence.

46. Rapid resumption of social service delivery can also play an important role in supporting the extension of State authority. The efforts of UNICEF in Somalia, for example, support the resumption of educational services through the rehabilitation and construction of schools in areas recaptured from al-Shabaab, helping to restore confidence in the State. The programme, conducted as part of the three-year interim education sector strategic plan, involves extensive participation of diverse clans and communities so as to strengthen social cohesion and ensure broad acceptance.

47. The early availability of funding for institution-building is critical to the rapid restoration of basic State administrative and service delivery functions. Policy and guidance tools, reflecting lessons learned from previous undertakings, are also necessary. To this end, the United Nations and the World Bank have developed a joint diagnostic tool for re-establishing core government functions in post-conflict situations. The Central African Republic has already benefited from this endeavour. A joint World Bank and United Nations initiative for the early payment of salaries to civil servants bolstered confidence in the Transitional Authorities and helped to ensure the basic functioning of ministries and security forces in advance of more comprehensive assistance.

48. Beyond such efforts, generating sufficient domestic revenues to fund government operations is essential to the development of State institutions. In Burundi, Liberia and Rwanda the creation of an independent taxation authority and the revision of tax policies with United Nations technical support have led to

significant increases in public revenue collection. This is particularly notable because developing a domestic tax base and collection system is a long-term endeavour, prompting many countries to rely primarily on natural resources for State revenue in the years after conflict.

49. Sustainable and transparent management of natural resources is central to post-conflict planning since it represents both a critical source of government revenue and a significant driver of violent conflict where natural resources are not well managed. Overdependence on such revenues can discourage countries from developing sustainable tax income, which is critical for long-term growth and enhancing a social contract. The challenge lies in establishing institutions that support a sustainable transformation of natural assets into State revenues, livelihoods and infrastructure without creating new sources of friction or contributing to long-term environmental degradation.

50. To meet this challenge, the United Nations has established a global partnership with the European Union on land, natural resources and conflict prevention, which has assisted several Governments, including in Afghanistan, with the management of natural resources in ways that minimize conflict. In the Great Lakes region, the partnership is supporting Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda to improve natural resource management and promote transparency in land tenure and mining, in collaboration with civil society groups and the private sector. In addition, the United Nations and the World Bank have developed a conflict-sensitive framework to help Governments respond to conflict risks through key entry points along the extractive industries value chain.

51. In Sierra Leone the United Nations worked to strengthen the capacity of the Environmental Protection Agency's long-term resource planning, mine monitoring and environmental assessment. This has led to improved environmental and social impact assessments, which, in turn, helped to accelerate investment in the sector. Impact assessments have provided a mechanism to encourage public participation in decision-making over natural resource management, reducing tensions with local communities. In Liberia, where competition for land and control over natural resources are also sources of conflict, the United Nations is working with the World Bank to help the Government to better manage natural resource concessions through strengthened citizens' consultation and engagement in planning and implementation. This effort complements the capacity-building and technical assistance provided by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to Liberia's Land Commission, which is implementing extensive land reforms, as well as engaging in community-level, land dispute resolution.

52. Post-conflict States are vulnerable not only to violence and the destabilization of institutions, but also to infiltration by organized crime. Indeed, transnational organized crime, including trafficking in drugs and arms, continues to undermine progress towards sustainable peace in Central America, Central Asia and West Africa. Under the West Africa Coast Initiative, multi-agency transnational crime units were established in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, to be followed by Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea later in 2014. While full implementation in Guinea-Bissau was delayed by the coup d'état in 2012, the Liberian and Sierra Leonean transnational crime units have advanced national and international cooperation, leading to arrests, convictions and substantial drug seizures. The decision by the Government of Sierra Leone to fully incorporate the units within its national

security architecture and budget demonstrated its deep commitment to the initiative. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is assisting Malian police and law enforcement institutions to improve their capacity to conduct counter-narcotics operations, criminal investigations and border control.

53. The Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2014 has led to great loss of life and has had severe consequences for people's livelihoods and State institutions in the affected countries. The epidemic has had a particularly devastating impact on the health-care sector and has placed new strains on the security and justice sectors and core government functions. The epidemic has highlighted institutional weaknesses in the affected countries and the need for sustained support to national frameworks and systems, which are crucial for long-term stability.

V. Sustained international support and mutual accountability

54. Post-conflict peacebuilding is a generational undertaking that relies heavily on predictable financial, technical and political support in the short, medium and long term. It also requires coherence among a wide spectrum of actors, including neighbouring countries, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions and donor countries. The transnational dimensions of many conflicts, including the cross-border movement of weapons, combatants and illicit financial and natural resource flows, make regional involvement in support of post-conflict stability essential. The annual session of the Peacebuilding Commission in June 2014 also highlighted the need for greater international and regional cooperation to help post-conflict States combat illicit financial flows, which deprive them of critical resources for institution-building and development.

55. The peace, security and cooperation framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region represents a groundbreaking commitment by the countries of the region and international and civil society organizations to join forces around mutual accountability and sustainable peace. The framework, signed by 13 African States and witnessed by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, the United Nations and other key partners requires its signatories to implement policies that foster political stability, justice, security and development. It is a tool that is essential to ensure greater coherence among international and regional actors in support of the peacebuilding process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

56. Recent experience in the Sahel and central Africa has also illustrated the need for regional strategies that are multidimensional, addressing political, security and developmental aspects. Reflecting this need, the United Nations has developed an integrated strategy for the Sahel that is built around support for inclusive and effective governance, regional and national security mechanisms capable of addressing cross-border threats and integrated plans for long-term resilience. As part of the strategy, the United Nations is partnering with the African Union to support a regional, ministerial-level leadership platform tasked with boosting security coordination and cooperation in the region and neighbouring States. This effort

represents an extraordinary move to advance partnerships among international, regional and national actors in a comprehensive way.

57. The President of the World Bank and I made unprecedented visits to the Great Lakes region in May 2013, and to the Sahel, together with colleagues from the African Union, the African Development Bank and the European Union, in November 2013. These joint visits drew attention to peacebuilding challenges in two highly vulnerable regions and provided renewed emphasis on the United Nations-World Bank partnership. Our visit underscored the close collaboration between the United Nations and the World Bank in Mali, where a joint project assesses the economic and social impact of MINUSMA deployment with a view to maximizing benefits to the local economy. Simultaneously, the World Bank financial management assessment of Mali's security sector will make possible more transparent management of and greater international support to this sector.

58. The Peacebuilding Commission also has a particular role to play in enhancing the coherence of regional efforts. This has been a priority for the Commission, especially recently, with regard to the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau, where the Chairs of the Commission's respective country-specific configurations have worked closely with my Special Representatives to engender collaboration from neighbouring countries and the region.

59. In addition to political support, most countries emerging from conflict require sustained financial and technical support for essential State functioning and the development of effective institutions. In this regard, the United Nations is expanding its partnerships and collaboration with international financial institutions, including regional development banks, to support post-conflict recovery and promote coherence and long-term financial assistance. A case in point is the Geneva Partners Conference organized by the Government of Burundi in October 2012 with the support of the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configuration, the African Development Bank and the World Bank, which raised pledges of more than $2.5 billion in support of Burundi's poverty reduction strategy paper.

60. In post-conflict situations, pooled financing mechanisms continue to be important instruments for coherent and sustained international support. They encourage aid alignment behind government priorities, foster greater coherence of international responses to complex situations, reduce transaction costs, share risks and strengthen mutual accountability. The Peacebuilding Fund is one such pooled financing mechanism. It has been extremely useful in enabling the United Nations to support peace processes, foster rapid implementation of peace agreements and invest in early institution-building and the provision of peace dividends. Since its creation, the Fund has allocated nearly $500 million, with the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission receiving more than half. Pooled funding instruments have also served to enhance collaboration between the United Nations and the World Bank. The Somalia development and reconstruction facility, for example, serves as both a coordination framework and a financing architecture providing a single strategy and oversight mechanism for trust funds managed by the World Bank and the United Nations.

61. Compacts between post-conflict States and key international partners around mutually agreed peacebuilding priorities also have the potential to ensure more effective and sustained assistance. The New Deal compacts in Sierra Leone and

Somalia have galvanized joint efforts by the respective Governments and their international partners to identify clear national peacebuilding priorities. In Somalia the compact was accompanied by the Somalia development and reconstruction facility, which channels new funding in support of the compact's priorities. If their development and implementation reflect domestic consensus on political and developmental goals, compacts can provide an opportunity to maintain coherent international engagement in the longer term and ensure mutual accountability between countries emerging from conflict and their international partners.

62. Generating sustained international political and financial support is particularly critical during the drawdown and closure of United Nations missions. Mission transition and reconfiguration involves the handover of responsibilities to national Governments, with the country team continuing to play a supporting role. New guidelines for these transitions, based on realistic timelines and benchmarks, as well as guidance for comparative advantage analysis, were developed as a complement to the integrated assessment and planning policy. The guidelines advanced better planning and coordination in the transition in Sierra Leone, which was completed smoothly in March 2014.

63. Typically, peacebuilding challenges in post-conflict countries outlast the presence of United Nations missions. For country teams to continue critical interventions in institution-building and development, sufficient funding and capacities must be available. The withdrawal of missions also can limit the Organization's ability to provide ongoing political support and facilitation, which remains critical in some countries. In such cases, the engagement of regional and subregional organizations together with intergovernmental mechanisms, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, should be called upon to provide the political accompaniment required to reduce the risk of relapse.

64. For the United Nations, the peacebuilding architecture created in 2005 remains a cornerstone of international efforts to support countries emerging from conflict. The decision by Member States to establish the architecture was a response to the frequent relapse into violence of countries emerging from conflict and to a perceived gap in the overall international structure. Within the United Nations, the architecture institutionalized a mechanism to promote sustained attention and coherence of international efforts over time. Its centrepiece is the Peacebuilding Commission, which can bring to bear the collective weight of Member States in support of peace consolidation, utilizing a longer-term post-conflict perspective.

65. The Peacebuilding Commission has devoted considerable effort to realizing a strengthened, more flexible and more strategic role as an intergovernmental mechanism supporting countries emerging from conflict by focusing on its three core functions: political advocacy; resource mobilization; and the coherence of international efforts. It has achieved important results, albeit unevenly, through its country-specific configurations for the six countries on its agenda. Moreover, the Commission has addressed broader peacebuilding themes and policy issues aimed at extracting lessons learned and sharing experiences on cross-cutting issues.

66. The review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2015 will provide an opportunity to strengthen and clarify the scope and quality of the Peacebuilding Commission's engagement and the ways in which it could enhance the broader peacebuilding activities of the United Nations system and the larger international community. I urge Member States to shape the kind of Commission that is relevant,

catalytic and effective. Member States should also consider how best to adapt the Commission's working methods to the changing international environment and to developments within the United Nations and other international organizations since 2005.

VI. Conclusion

67. Countries emerging from conflict face formidable challenges as they seek to overcome the legacy of war and find the path to peace and security. The United Nations has made significant progress in its peacebuilding support to such countries, in several areas and in a variety of contexts. Yet, the Organization has also faced relapses into violence, which underscore the enormity of the task and compel an improvement in its strategies and approaches.

68. Going forward, the United Nations, Member States and the wider international community engaged in post-conflict peacebuilding should collectively focus on the following priorities:

(a) The international community needs to do more to sustain financial, technical and political support to post-conflict countries. Continued Member State engagement through the Peacebuilding Commission and through groups of friends or contact groups has proven to be fundamental to sustaining international attention;

(b) There are continued gaps in the provision of rapid and coherent financial support for the extension of State authority and the re-establishment of core public administration functions. There is also a need to sustain financial support over the long period required by post-conflict States to establish effective institutions, including mechanisms for dialogue and the management of tensions. I urge Member States to continue contributing generously to the Peacebuilding Fund and other pooled financing mechanisms and to coordinate their funding strategies in support of national priorities;

(c) Collaboration with the World Bank and regional development banks should be expanded to support, among other areas, the effective extension of State authority and the strengthening of public financial management, which are critical in post-conflict States. Such partnerships could mobilize specific skills and expertise as well as additional financial resources;

(d) Regional actors and neighbouring countries play a critical role in creating environments conducive to sustainable peace for countries emerging from violent conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission, regional and subregional organizations can support the creation of such environments, in collaboration with United Nations entities. At the same time, further consideration should be given to how the United Nations system can better support regional efforts;

(e) Compacts remain an important tool to set national peacebuilding priorities and align support from the international community. They should be designed to strengthen political accompaniment of national commitments. I encourage the involvement of regional actors in these compacts;

(f) The United Nations must also work in a more integrated and coherent manner. Its efforts must be guided by a political strategy that addresses the principal threats to peace and stability so that programmatic activities can best support the

consolidation of peace. Planning processes should ensure that the United Nations family works towards a clear set of strategic objectives aimed at consolidating peace;

(g) The development of core political institutions, civilian oversight of the security forces, public administration and basic services need to be rooted in inclusive political agreements to ensure the popular legitimacy of the State. The process of inclusive institution-building often requires continued facilitation from the United Nations as well as sustained political support from regional organizations and Member States;

(h) The review of the peacebuilding architecture in 2015 provides an opportunity to ensure that it better serves the needs of countries emerging from conflict and that collective efforts to prevent their relapse into conflict are more successful. I urge Member States to take advantage of the review to make this a reality.

69. I remain committed to continue learning lessons from our experiences on the ground in diverse contexts in order to optimize the impact of United Nations peacebuilding efforts, including in furtherance of my Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding.

70. I stand ready to report further on the Organization's progress, experiences and lessons learned in peacebuilding.